

island outpost the war has left its effects. There is the sadness of lonely Niuean graves in countries the names of which were hardly known hitherto to the Natives; but among the people there is also a wider knowledge of the world and of the meaning of civilization, a pride in the nation to which they belong, and an assurance that our flag is no mere empty symbol, our Empire no vain boast.

I have, &c.,

GUY N. MORRIS,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. the Minister for the Cook Islands, Wellington.

REPORT OF SCHOOL-TEACHER.

I have the honour to lay before you a report on Tufukia School for the year ended 31st March, 1919.

Roll Number.—At the end of March, 1918, the number of pupils in attendance was 155 boys and 78 girls, totalling 233 pupils. During the year just closing 13 boys and 11 girls were admitted, but 14 boys and 6 girls were withdrawn during the same period; thus there are left at date 154 boys and 83 girls, totalling 237 pupils.

Attendance.—During the year the average daily attendance was as follows: 125.85 boys and 68.37 girls, totalling 194.22. This works out to be 88.8 per cent. of the average school roll for the year. On the face of it this seems an unsatisfactory state of affairs, but when one considers the amount of minor sickness there is among the young folk; the want of appreciation of their responsibilities by the parents in connection with educational matters; the failure to recognize, by the parents, the future value their education will be to the young; the quite different conditions in a schoolroom from what the children are used to otherwise in their own free and easy modes of life and thought; and the heavy rains at certain parts of the year, then one has not far to seek for the main causes of the great difference between the actual roll number and the average attendance. Moreover, a great many of the pupils come from villages distant four to seven miles from the school, to which they walk every morning to commence the day's work at 7 o'clock.

A very pleasing feature of the attendance for the year ended 31st December last was the fact that no less than twenty-one pupils were awarded a prize each for having attended every half-day the school was opened, some of the prize-takers being pupils from the outside villages aforementioned.

Progress.—Despite the many disabilities under which we labour, and the many interruptions we were subjected to during the year, the general rate of progress was maintained. At the beginning of the year under review I was unable to give undivided attention to my school-work owing to the duties pertaining to the position of Resident Commissioner falling to my lot. I was able, though, to control the school and do a great amount of teaching; but in a school of this description, more so than in a white school, to carry things to a successful issue one requires to have his whole mind on school work and affairs. Then, on the 19th November last, Mr. Cowan, the first assistant, left for Rarotonga and New Zealand on holiday leave, and has not yet returned. Moreover, with a Native staff, the members of which have to be trained daily in both general knowledge and methods of teaching, you cannot expect the best of work. But with all the drawbacks there is much to be thankful for as a result of our labours. The pupils are certainly making headway, and the time has come when a wider and more solid curriculum of work can be undertaken. It is very gratifying to hear from visitors, as well as from those residents on the island who are competent of judging, of the very great difference apparent between the pupils attending the school and the children in the rest of the island, not only in looks, bearing, and health, but also in general knowledge, intelligence, and manners.

Health.—Although there has been no outbreak of serious illness during the year, still the attendance has been greatly affected by numerous minor cases of sickness. During the third quarter there was a mild outbreak of scabies, which necessitated the isolation of quite a number of the pupils for a lengthy period. The very prompt and energetic measures adopted by the Medical Officer in connection with it prevented the spread of this disease throughout the school. His very great interest in the health and welfare of the pupils of the school is a great aid to me in my work. He is ever available to attend to the children. I hereby extend to him my heartiest and sincerest thanks for his kindness in this direction.

There is one pleasing feature in regard to this section of the school interests, and that is the general health of the children has vastly improved since they came to school. This is very apparent to outsiders, who frequently comment upon the healthy and happy appearance of the pupils of the school. This desirable state of affairs is due mainly to the lessons on health given by the members of the staff and the Medical Officer. For some little time past the latter gentleman has been coming up every week, and delivering a lecturette to the whole of the pupils. On two or three subsequent days the gist of his remarks is put upon the blackboard in simple English, and thoroughly explained in English and Niue, assisted by examples, stories, pictures, and drawings. The children then write the lessons in their best writing, learn it, and say it to the teachers. They also are set to draw the incidental pictures and drawings. The thing about it, though, that appeals to me most as a teacher is that, though the most of the matter has been taught by the school staff and learnt before, my statements are in this manner backed up by the one who speaks with authority on these matters. This scheme is capable of great usefulness in the future life of these boys and girls.

I have, &c.,

J. C. EVISON, Headmaster.